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THE RAILROAD.

Facts and Suggestions for the People.

Geographically considered, the harbors of Norfolk, Virginia, or Hampton Roads, and New York, occupy the most important and commanding positions on the Atlantic coast of the United States.

Then the Norfolk harbor presents great advantages, being large enough to accommodate shipping for all the surplus products and merchandise of the west and northwest.

The Chesapeake Bay affords the finest harbors on the coast, and moreover, they are those farthest to the north on the Atlantic coast that are never obstructed by ice.

To the north, the harbors are liable to obstructions by ice every winter, and their approaches are often endangered by the fogs which prevail in those latitudes.

Proper lines of internal improvements leading from tide water, Virginia, to the north-west, via the great Kanawha Valley, would make Norfolk a much better and cheaper seaport than New York, for Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Dakota, with portions also of Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Lieutenant Maury says, that "Pittsburg, Wheeling, Columbus and Toledo, with the whole States of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska, with the country to the south of them, are geographically nearer to the capes of Virginia than to Sandy Hook."

All this country that lies west of the Alleghany Mountains and north of Tennessee is now commercially tributary to New York, Philadelphia or Baltimore, rather than Norfolk.

Like works passing through Virginia into this magnificent mineral, manufacturing, and agricultural country, would secure to her seaport towns their natural advantages, line their wharves with merchandise and produce, and crowd their harbors with shipping.

Norfolk, with its deep waters, spacious harbors and free outlet between the capes of Virginia to the sea, occupies, geographically, what the early discoverers thought would be, and what Physical Geography claims is, the most commanding commercial position along the whole Atlantic seaboard of the United States.

Why, then, it may be asked have New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, each in a position less favored by nature, so far surpassed Norfolk in their commercial success?

(The most of the preceding is from Lieutenant F. Maury's preliminary report of the physical survey of Virginia.)

Now, we find capitalists have taken hold of the Virginia improvement, known as the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, and have the same completed into the mountains.

With this road built, and in connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio R. R. to Norfolk Virginia, I have not a doubt but we would have one of the best paying Railroads, for its length, in the State of Ohio.

There are several daily steam packets running between this point, Kanawha, Salinas, Parkersburg, and the Pomeroy region, and give us this Railroad connection, and in a very short time we will have more than double the number, for the fact of the road being built would give such facilities for traveling that

people would be induced to visit different parts of the country, that without such facilities, seldom leave home, and hundreds would visit and pass through this section that now avoid it, because they look upon us as behind the age, in having no Railroad communication with any point.

With the Railroad completed from this point (Gallipolis) to Logan, no doubt but large quantities of the iron and coal from these counties would pass over our road and find a market here.

Athens county mined in 1867, 4,923,060 bushels coal. Perry county mined in 1867, 422,817 bushels coal.

This road would run so close to the coalfields of those counties that I have no doubt but in time some of it will find its way over this road to the Ohio river.

Neither have I a doubt but if it were once known that the building of this road to a connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad at this point, is a fixed fact, we will have enterprise and capital enough come to our city to have manufactures of different kinds ready to raise steam, and start their machinery by the time the road is ready to bring them the coal from the interior.

Since writing the foregoing, I notice, by the Cincinnati Commercial, of the 16th inst., that the citizens of Highland county, and of some of the counties adjoining it, had a Railroad meeting at Hillsborough on the 5th, when they organized a new Railroad Company called the Cincinnati, Gallipolis and Pomeroy Railroad Company, and appear determined to push their road through to this point with all the energy possible.

Now, it may be asked, how is this, that while Gallia Co. is one of the first settled counties in the State, well located on the line of one of the most prominent natural thoroughfares from the Atlantic seaboard to the west and northwest, and southwest, in a good agricultural district, that there is so much uncultivated land in it, as compared with the other counties named above, or the unnamed counties that have still less.

I consider that the coal trade of this part of the country is yet in its infancy, but believe in a very few years there will be moving out of the Kanawha Valley, thousands if not millions of bushels of coal, where now there are hardly hundreds mined.

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Railroads running full trains each way can carry freight for much less rate per ton than when running with only partial loads.

Now, what do you say, shall we make this road, and thereby secure the connection with the Chesapeake & Ohio road, and thereby materially benefit ourselves? Are you willing to put your shoulders to the wheel, and help lift this section out of the lethargy that has for so many years kept it bound down, while other points, with no greater natural advantages, and with more energy, and unity of action, have been and still are taking the lead.

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have another so favorable. The citizens of this section had better give one-third of all the real estate they own, in my opinion, than to let this present opportunity slip, and the balance be worth more money at the end of three years if the Railroad is secured, than the whole of it would be worth at the end of ten years without a Railroad.

While speaking above of coal, reference should have been made to the quality of the coal in the Kanawha Valley. I have not at hand at this moment, the means of describing it fully, but its general character is said to be equal to that of any bituminous coal in America, for any and all purposes; some veins said to be of very superior quality, and the quantity almost unlimited.

I consider that Gallia county is situated as if it was at the bottom of a large round basin, with its sides lined with wealth, and all that is needed for the citizens of said Gallia County, to do, to avail themselves of a fair portion of it, is to be united in this Railroad movement.

Oil the sides of the basin, you need have no fears, but you will reap a rich harvest. Again I ask you to strike while the iron is hot, or the advantages that are now within your reach may be diverted to other channels and pass around you.

GALLIPOLIS, May 10, 1870. Since writing the foregoing, I notice, by the Cincinnati Commercial, of the 16th inst., that the citizens of Highland county, and of some of the counties adjoining it, had a Railroad meeting at Hillsborough on the 5th, when they organized a new Railroad Company called the Cincinnati, Gallipolis and Pomeroy Railroad Company, and appear determined to push their road through to this point with all the energy possible.

Southern Ohio has lying dormant below the surface of the earth, millions and millions of wealth, the development of which, with the agricultural products of the soil, would soon make it one of the richest and most flourishing sections of the country, and to stimulate such development, we need cheap transportation facilities, and he who aids in creating these facilities, not only benefits himself but he has the proud and noble satisfaction of knowing that he is, also benefiting his neighbor and the whole country.

It is said that he who can produce by his energy and skill two grains of wheat where but one was produced before, is a public benefactor. So, he that creates or furnishes transportation facilities for moving freight from points of production, or from points where it is lying dormant for want of cheap transportation, to points of consumption, at probably one-tenth, one-eight, or one-fourth the present cost of transportation, is a much greater benefactor of mankind, and is adding greatly to the available wealth of the country. And while the building of Railroads may for the moment appear burdensome, after once completed they will soon begin to lighten the burden and pay back the outlay in the general increase in the value of property, in the facilities they furnish for reaching distant markets, with produce, in the cheapening freight, in time saved in freight and traveling, and in the general development of all the resources of the country, which is sure to follow a decline in the cost of transportation, and shortening the time required to reach markets.

W. H. LANGLEY.

Table with 2 columns: Tons pig metal, Bushels coal. Rows include Gallia county, Jackson, Vinton, Hocking.